

Remarks

This amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated March 31, 2003. Claims 48-49 and 52-90 are currently pending. Claims 61, 68 and 74 have been currently amended. New claims 75-90 have been added. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Claims 61, 68 and 74 have been amended for reasons unrelated to any patentability rejections.

Claims 48-49 and 52-74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,978,420 to Bach taken with U.S. Patent No. 6,001,538 to Chen et al. ("Chen") and U.S. Patent No. 5,960,306 to Hall et al. ("Hall"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the following criteria should be met. First, there should be a suggestion or motivation in the art to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there should be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the reference(s) must teach all the claim limitations. MPEP section 706.02(j). Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's citations to the art are insufficient to satisfy the three criteria above and accordingly, the rejections should be withdrawn.

Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's obviousness conclusions. Applicant notes that the Examiner stated at page 2 of the Office Action that "Bach does not recite the identical language of the pad". The Examiner then cited Chen and Hall, and stated at page 3 of the Office Action that "it would have been obvious to one skilled in practicing Bach to have employed the metal line to be the aluminum pad since such corresponds to conventional language and structure for such aluminum structure as pad as evidence by Chen or Hall wherein such pad application and opening thereto can be obtained." Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner, while pointing out a similarities in the material of a metal line and an aluminum, has not met his burden to establish "a suggestion or motivation in the art" to modify Bach. As cited by the Examiner, Bach appears to relates to vias formed between wiring layers. Chen and Hall, as cited by the Examiner, appear to relate to pad structures. The Examiner appears to have cited no specific portion of the art that suggests why one of ordinary skill in the art of pad structures would look to Bach and then combine

Bach with Chen and Hall. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is using improper hindsight to pick and choose specific features from different references and then combining the references without a suggestion in the art to do so.

The Examiner also stated on page 3 of the Office Action that "The use of isotropic etching would have been obvious and advantageous as taught by Chen wherein penetration and attack of the passivation layer over the wiring lines can be obviated." Applicant is not certain of the meaning of this statement, but respectfully submits that the Examiner cited no specific portion of the art that supports the contention that isotropic etching obviates penetration and attack of the passivation layer over the wiring lines.

The Examiner also stated on page 3 of the Office Action that "It would have been obvious and would have been within the purview of one skilled in the art to have employed the desired profiles including a desired angle the upper layer and a more steeping angle for the lower layer if desired as evidence in Chen, to have optimized the appropriate distance to improve device packing." Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner cited no specific portion of the art that describes or suggests that an angle of the side surface of the second insulating layer surrounding the opening is smaller than a tapered opening of a side surface of the first insulating layer surrounding the opening (as recited in claim 53), improves device packing. By the Examiner reasoning, one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to form an opening where both layers have sides at right angles to the pad instead of having upper and lower layers with different angles.

For at least the reasons discussed above, applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not met his burden to establish obviousness and accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

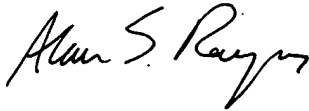
New claims 75-90 have been added. Support for these claims may be found throughout the specification and figures. It is believed that no new matter has been entered.

The Office Action also included various comments concerning the art and the non-patentability of features in various of the pending claims. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's non-patentability conclusions. The discussion above has directly addressed some of those comments and the Examiner's other comments are deemed moot at this time in view of this response.

Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in patentable form. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. If, for any reason, the application

is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner requested to telephone the undersigned to discuss the steps necessary to place the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



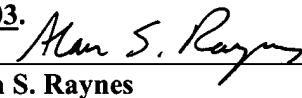
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Alan S. Raynes

June 30, 2003
Date